

LITERARY GEMS.

VOL. I.

THE SWEETS OF MANY A FLOWER.

NO. 7.

CHILDHOOD.

We come to being from the night,
As cometh forth the morning light;
The world is beautiful and new,
The earth is filled with flowers and dew;
Birds loudly sing on wing and spray,
And we more merrily than they.

We gather strength, we run, we leap,
Find joy in every thing—and sleep;
With mirth and beauty hand in hand,
We take possession of the land:
Life then is surely not a breath—
What then has life to do with death?

A mother's love, her smiles, her tears,
Are with us in those blessed years;
The seeds of fond affection sown
In youth, that strong in age are grown;
Love, that in part her love repays,
Her solace in declining days;
Warmth, light in age's wintry gloom,
Fair stars, sweet blossoms to the tomb.

Then knowledge comes with manhood's noon,
With care and sorrow,—all too soon.
The springs of mystery are unsealed,
Whate'er was hidden is revealed;
A common vision is the spring;
The rainbow is a common thing;
The morning and the sunset skies
Are gazed on with familiar eyes;
The reign of wild delight is o'er,
And the bright earth is heaven no more!

FLORETTA;

OR, THE FIRST LOVE OF HENRY IV.

"The historical incident, on which the following tale is founded, is related in the Chronicles of Nerac:

At Nerac, a neat little town in the province of Gascony, a great festival was being celebrated, in honour of the visit which Charles IX., king of France, attended by his whole court, was then paying to the court of Navarre.

Amongst the number of those who accompanied the king was young Henry, prince of Bearn, and son of the Queen of Navarre, who had hitherto received his education at the court of Paris. Although only fifteen years of age, he was tall as most other youths at eighteen. He had, as yet scarcely a sign of down on his chin, but his heart was as stout as the sword he carried, and his hands hard and strong, through the laborious work to which he had always accustomed himself. He was rather a wild youth; rode, hunted, fenced, and danced, equal to any at court, and climbed amongst the mountains and rocks like a kid. It was, however, impossible not to like the young prince—he was so amiable, so lively, and so good-natured; and when sometimes a little more extravagant in his behaviour than at others, it required but few words to remind him of his duty, and he became again as quiet as a lamb, which in a youth, heir to a throne, was scarcely to be expected.

The people of Nerac, therefore, took more delight in gazing on the beautiful and innocent Henry than on all the pomp of majesty; their regards were fixed on him who was deserving the highest honours, rather than on him to whom they were paid. The king went about gravely and majestically, seldom condescending to return any of the salutations with which he was greeted, whilst Henry acknowledged them right and left, with a smile; and then in his smile there was so much grace and loveliness, at least such was the unanimous opinion of the maids of Nerac, who were, no doubt, very competent judges in the matter.

It is true that in the retinue of the king were several brave and handsome young men, and amongst others the Duke de Guise, about three years older than the

Prince of Bearn. But he was regarded in a friendly manner, merely because he behaved so to others. The young duke was well aware of this, which most probably added to the dislike he already bore to the Queen of Navarre's son. Although they had both been brought up at Paris as playfellows and companions in youth, they had still never been able to agree for any length of time, which the King of France perceiving, and having almost constant employment in settling their little disputes, at length determined they should separate, and that Henry should go to reside with his mother.

Amongst the other amusements on this occasion, shooting with the cross-bow was one, at which the king himself was unhappily very expert. It is well known how, six years afterwards, at the infamous massacre of St. Bartholomew, he shot at the Huguenots, his own subjects. At Nerac, however, the game was certainly a little more harmless—an orange, placed at a proper distance, having been chosen for the mark.

Whenever kings or princes value themselves upon excelling in a particular art, there are few persons so presumptuous as to be able to surpass them. Not a courtier dared to hit the golden fruit with the arrow, in order not to deprive the king of the glory, or rather the vain notion of being the best shooter with the cross-bow in the kingdom. The Duke de Guise was also an excellent marksman, but at the same time an excellent courtier. His arrow flew, of course, far from the mark. There were many spectators, both from the palace and the town, who really believed that the king excelled all his courtiers, as his arrow had flown the nearest, and almost grazed the orange. They were, however, as yet ignorant of the manner of shooting, as practised at courts.

Suddenly there was a cry of "Now for the Prince of Bearn!" Young Henry stepped forward with his cross-bow, and taking aim, at one shot split the golden mark exactly in the middle. A murmur of applause arose among the spectators; the ladies, smiling, whispered something into each other's ear: the king looked, however, black, and was little pleased with the skill young Henry had displayed.

According to the rules of the game, the Prince of Bearn wanted to begin again, and have the first aim at the fresh orange that had been stuck up as the mark. This was opposed by Charles, who determined not to be deprived of his assumed prerogative, exclaimed, "We must go on in the usual order."—"Certainly," said Henry, "according to the rules of the game." Kings, however, when angry, seldom deign to accustom themselves to any rule. As Henry, notwithstanding, again stepped forward to take aim, he was rudely pushed back by the king; the young prince, naturally impetuous, started back a few paces, and bending the string of his bow, took aim with his arrow at Charles.

His Majesty, dreadfully alarmed, ran away, and sheltered himself behind one of the stoutest of his courtiers, who, fancying the arrow already in his body, cried out "*meurtre!*" at the same time placing his broad hands before his stomach, as if to keep off the deadly weapon. Henry although very much enraged, burst out into a loud laugh, at the sight of the little stout man standing before the king in such a trembling attitude. The maids and women of Nerac, seeing the young prince laugh so lustily, began also to titter; and their example was soon followed by all except the courtiers, who scarcely knew what sort of a face to make up on the occasion. But the king who was as little inclined to laugh as his broad-backed courtier, cried out from behind his refuge-place, in an

angry tone, "Bring away the Prince of Bearn." Luckily, however, Lagaucherie, Henry's perceptor, was at hand, who led him away by the arm to the palace.

This little quarrel between Charles and the young prince led, of course, to no serious consequences.—Henry, who was a thoughtless young fellow, was obliged to crave pardon of the king, and the matter was settled.

On the morrow the same company assembled again, to shoot with the cross-bow at the same kind of mark as on the preceding day. All the maids, ladies, and men of Nerac were present, and the number of spectators was much greater than before, in the hopes of again having something to laugh at. The king, however, did not attend this day, but remained, under some pretext or other, at the palace.

This day all the shooters took much better aim than on the preceding day: the good people of Nerac could not at all conceive how they had become so expert in one night. The mark was removed farther, nevertheless all the oranges were soon hit off. The young Duke de Guise in particular distinguished himself by his skill; the last orange that was left having been placed up at the mark, he took aim, and split it in halves.

Henry was very much disappointed at all the oranges being gone, as he had had such a particular wish to have a trial in skill with his young rival. He looked right and left, to try to discover something that would serve as a mark to his arrow, but in vain. At last he descried among the spectators a young girl of about the same age as himself, a perfect model of beauty. She stood there looking on the festive scene in simple attire, with her lovely innocent face half shadowed by her bonnet. Henry hastily went up to the little beauty of Nerac, not that it was her that he wanted as a mark for his arrow, but the rose which she wore at her bosom. Henry asked her for the flower, and blushing she gave him the image of herself. He hastened with it to the target, and sticking it up as a mark, ran back to the shooting-house.

"Now, duke," exclaimed the prince, panting, "you are the winner, there's another mark for you, and 'tis yours to have the first aim;" at the same time sucking blood from his wounded finger, which he had scratched with a thorn of the rose.

The duke took aim, let fly, and missed. Henry, stepping forward, took aim, and casting a glance over his arm to the side where stood the little beauty, and then another on the rose, let fly, and the arrow pierced the heart of the flower.

"Won," cried Guise. But the young prince, wishing to be convinced of his success, ran up to the target, and drawing the arrow out of the wood, found the pierced rose clinging round it, as to a stalk. He hastened with it to the lovely girl from whom he had stolen the flower, and with a gentle bow offered her the rose and the victorious arrow together.

"Your present has proved very lucky to me," said the prince.

"But your luck has been the ruin of my poor rose," replied the girl, trying at the same time to loosen the flower from the arrow.

"For that I will willingly leave you the guilty dart."

"I have no occasion for it," returned the girl.

"That I believe," replied Henry; "you wound with sharper darts," at the same time steadfastly regarding the beautiful innocent who stood before him. He blushed as well as she, and held his hand involuntarily to his breast, as if to preserve it from some disaster. Unable to utter another word, he bowed, and went back to his companions.

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The game was already over; the courtiers returned to the palace, which was situate on the sloping plain on the banks of the Blaize, and the spectators and common people soon after dispersed. The young fair one also went away with the rose at the tip of the arrow, along with her companions, who seemed to be envious of her. She walked, however, quite sorrowfully and silently along, regarding nothing but the pierced rose, and looked as if the heart within her had shared a similar fate.

Henry having arrived at the palace with the rest of the shooters, turned round once more to look at the crowd, which was dispersing in all directions, but without discovering the object of his search.

"And who, pray, is that pretty girl whom I took the rose from just now?" said Henry to one of the noblemen of the queen, his mother.

"She is the daughter of the gardener of the palace," replied the other, "and does equal credit to her father as to herself."

"What's her name then?"

"At present Floretta, but when she's older, Flora."

"Floretta!" exclaimed Henry, scarcely knowing what he was saying, and gave another look round, although conscious that there was nothing there for him to see.

Often had Henry in his lifetime heard the word "love," and how could he well help hearing it in such a court as Paris? But hitherto he had but little understood its meaning: at present, however, he found not much difficulty in understanding it, and in his after life became more experienced in it than was creditable to his glory. The battles and victories, by which he afterwards gained the throne of France, were not half so difficult to enumerate as his amours. Even at the present day the villagers sing of the beautiful Gabrielle d'Estree, of the charming Henriette d'Entragues, of Jacqueline de Beuill, and of others who twined roses round the thorny life of Henry of France; and yet among all those whom he had ever loved, there was not one like Floretta of Nerac,—not one so beautiful or so lovely, if the degree of loveliness is at all raised by being more worthy of being loved, on account of a true return.

Such was Floretta: together with the rose, her heart had been pierced, and when Henry gave her the dart, her dark and fiery eye cast another into his unguarded breast.

Such was the beginning of the misfortunes of these two children. Neither of them knew what had happened to them. Floretta was buried the live-long day in dreams of the moment when the young prince stood before her with the arrow, and her nights were sleepless. As soon as Henry could get away from the palace, he ran round the garden, viewing all the flowers with the greatest attention, in order to ascertain, by their beauty, whether they had been planted, or even watered by Floretta. To see him there with his arms folded, standing so thoughtfully by the side of the flower-beds, one would have supposed he was about to turn botanist. At another time, when immersed in thought, and wandering up and down between the beds with his eyes fixed on the ground, he might have been taken for some adept searching after the philosopher's stone. Henry, however, was only trying to discover in the gravel paths the footsteps of his beautiful Floretta.

When arrived at the end of the garden, near the spring of La Garenne, a trembling ran through his body as he discerned footsteps which could be no other than hers. It is true, he had as yet not even seen Floretta's feet much less measured them; but then he was possessed of the truest eye and the finest powers of calculation, as he in after life proved on many a battle-field. Following the trace, he at last arrived at a little bridge thrown over the brook of Blaize. On the other side of the streamlet stood a neat little cottage, which he approached; wishing to know who

lived in it, but could find no one there to inform him. At last he discovered in one corner of the window his own arrow with the rose still clinging round it. He started back at the sight, and with a panting heart hastened again into the garden.

In the evening he visited the spot again; it was already nearly dark, but Henry's eyesight was keen. At a distance he discovered a girl at the spring of La Garenne, whom, from her size, he took to be no other than Floretta. She drew up a bucket of water, and lifting it on her head, went through the thicket over the little bridge to the cottage.

That evening there was a ball given at the palace, at which the princesses and the ladies of the court were all present; but in the eyes of the young prince there was not one that stepped so prettily as the little gardener-girl, with the bucket on her head. Afterwards, when he arose to dance himself, his looks rested less on his fair partner than at the door where the spectators were standing.

The next morning Henry was up with the lark, and went out with the spade on his shoulder to the spring, which, in his opinion, had too wild and neglected an appearance round about, probably no one ever went there unless to fetch water, as it was so far from the palace. He set about digging a large circle in the green turf around it, and continued at it the whole morning, until the perspiration actually ran from his forehead. At last when tired and thirsty, he went to the spring, and thought no wine ever half so delicious. He then hastened back to the palace, and went up melancholy into his room.

Had he remained there only a quarter of an hour longer, he would have been discovered by Floretta, who came as usual with her bucket. Seeing the circle that had been made round the spring, she said to herself, "Father must have been up very early this morning, or I wonder whether he ordered the men to do this."

When she came home, she mentioned what she had seen to old Lucas, her father, who seemed very much surprised at his having heard nothing about it. He went himself to the spot, and seeing what had been done, exclaimed angrily, "My men have been doing this now without my orders." He had them all brought before him, but each stoutly denied knowing any thing about the matter. Old Lucas shook his head, and as he could not at all conceive who had presumed to meddle with his office of gardener to the court, determined to be on the look-out himself; he watched, therefore, the whole day, but all his watching turned out in vain.

The following morning, the young prince went to the spring again at the same time, and began digging and raking the new beds even; then taking flower-roots from several parts of the garden, where they were too thick, he set them in a circle round the spring. He saw nobody all the time he was at work, and what was worse, no one saw him, at least not the person by whom he wished to be seen; he therefore resolved to make the best of his way back to the palace; the nearest road, however, happened to be a by-way that led past a certain neat little cottage. He cast a glance up at the window, and there discovered the lovely girl. The window was open, and Floretta standing at it, binding the long tresses of her raven-hair round her head. Flowers lay scattered on the window before her, which she had most probably intended for a place in her bonnet, or at her bosom. Henry greeted her at the window, and she returned the salutation; then mounting on a little bench that was before the house, he was nearly as high as Floretta, before whom he now stood quite close to the window.

A beautiful crimson, like a reflection from the morning clouds, instantly spread over her face and alabaster neck. "Shall I assist you in dressing?" said Henry. "What are you up so early, my young lord?" returned Floretta. Henry did not consider it at all

early, and she did not consider she needed any of his assistance. In his opinion, she required no other ornament to set her off than her own charms; and in her opinion he was only laughing at her, which was not at all becoming in him. Henry affirmed he had never spoken more truly in his life, and had never been able to forget her since she gave him the rose, which he regretted ever having returned, as he should have preferred keeping it as a token from her; and she regretted that the flowers then lying before her on the window were bad, but she would readily give him all if he had any wish for them. Henry asserted, whilst putting some of them in his breast, that the worst flowers received their worth from the giver; and she, on the other hand, began to think the flowers looked very pretty, now that he had placed them in his bosom.

Thus were these two thinking, and asserting, and regretting a great many more things, when old Lucas called Floretta into the adjoining room. Bowing with a sweet smile to the young prince, she disappeared. Henry returned to the palace, but with steps so light, that he seemed scarcely to feel the ground under his feet.

When old Lucas went home at mid-day from the garden to dinner, he exclaimed, "I should like to know who it can be that is playing me these tricks; that unknown gardener has been there again this morning, and parted and raked the beds, and actually begun to set some of them with flowers. I went out very early this morning on purpose, but the work was already done, and no one to be seen. I have been waiting there again the whole morning, but to no purpose. I don't know what to make of the matter; it may be, though, that he works at night by moonlight."

When Floretta went, as usual, in the evening to fetch water from the spring, it first occurred to her that the unknown gardener might be no other than the young prince, as it was from that direction she had seen him come to her in the morning to the window.

In the evening, after sunset, when the court had returned from some of the many festivities that were then daily taking place, Henry hastened into the garden to the spring, where he found Floretta's bonnet lying on the ground; he took it up, and, pressing it to his lips, kissed it. He then plucked in the twilight the most beautiful flowers he could find, and fetching from the palace a handsome sky-blue ribbon, twined the flowers in a sort of wreath round her bonnet. He went to old Lucas's cottage, but finding that they were all in bed, and the windows closed, he hung it outside on the shutter.

The next morning Floretta rose much earlier than usual, being determined to find out this midnight gardener, and discover him to her father. There might, however, have been a little curiosity, as well as a little of something else, mixed up with this wish, but which, of course, she mentioned to no one.

Having dressed herself as quietly as possible, she opened the window, when she discovered her bonnet hanging outside, with the wreath around it. Now it first occurred to her that she had left it the previous evening at the spring. She smiled at seeing the flowers and the ribbon, but then all at once making a sorrowful face, "Ah!" sighed she, "he must have been up earlier than I was this morning, as he has been here already."

Who it was that she meant by "he," she did not say. She looked at the flowers again, and taking them off, placed them in a jug of clean water; and then rolling up the ribbon, put it by along with her other simple finery; then going to the window, she got out on the little bench that was outside, and jumped to the ground. There was a proper house-door to the cottage, but she was afraid to open that, on account of the possibility of awakening her father.

Having passed the little bridge over the stream, she stopped all at once, hesitating whether to proceed or turn back. "I am certainly too late," thought she to herself; "father says he works only by moon-light; now the moon is gone down, and the sun is on the point of rising. But if he should really happen to be there, what would he think of my coming out so early? he'd suppose that it was on his account, and I should not like him to do that. No, I'll go back for my bucket, and pretend as if going for some water, and then he'll not suspect what I really came for." Such were the thoughts that then occupied Floretta, when she made up her mind to turn back; her resolution, however, was but weak, as she still kept going onwards to the spring.

She was already so near, that she heard the splashing of the water, and saw through the thicket the beds that had been so recently dug. With a tremulous joy she also saw a spade sticking in the earth close by.

"So he himself can't be far off," thought Floretta, "as he has left his things here. Perhaps he's only gone to get some flower roots. I'll hide myself, and watch him." She then went softly behind a coppice of elm, from which she could see unperceived every body that approached to the spring.

It must be recollected before the perusal of the continuation of this story, that Floretta had just secreted herself among the shrubbery to watch whether any one approached the spring.

"Whilst she was standing there concealed, her timorous heart began to beat terribly, as at every rustling of the leaves she fancied she saw some one coming. Her terror, however, was needless, as no one as yet appeared.

After she had been standing there some time, some one stole softly behind her, and holding her eyes bound with two hands, whispered into her ear, 'Now, Floretta, guess who it is.'

She soon guessed it, for in trying to remove the strange hands from her eyes, she felt a ring on one of the fingers. She did not, however, utter what she thought, but exclaimed, laughing, 'Ah, I know you, Jacqueline, by the ring on the finger you received from Lubin.'

'Wrong!' whispered the voice behind her. 'And as you can't guess who I am, I think I have a right to punish you.' And with that the lips that had been thus whispering to her imprinted a kiss on her beautiful neck. She tried to get loose, but finding herself so entangled that all her efforts were in vain, exclaimed, 'Let me loose, Minette you wicked girl. I know you now. You want to revenge upon me the trick I played you three weeks ago, in blinding your eyes whilst chattering with Colas.'

'Wrong again!' whispered the voice behind her, at the same time repeating the punishment on her gently-bent neck.

Floretta panted at every kiss she received, and begged to be let loose, but in vain. It did not seem, however, as if she cared much about her liberty; it might have been obstinacy, as pretty girls have often a very strong inclination that way. Be that as it may, she provoked a third time a repetition of the punishment, and exclaimed, 'Oh, so it is no other than Rosine Valdes, the wickedest creature in the whole town, whom I covered yesterday with almond-leaves whilst sitting alone at the window, thinking on Heaven knows who.'

'Again far from the mark,' whispered the voice behind her, and the kisses on her neck were redoubled beyond counting. In the bustle, however, Floretta contrived to slip her head downwards, and get free.—She turned round; when, seeing Henry standing there, she raised bashfully her little head, at the same time exclaiming with a smile, 'Could I have supposed, sir, that you would have behaved so rudely?'

Henry hastily begged pardon for his rudeness, which would have been instantly granted, had he not

done so. But because he asked to be forgiven, Floretta thought immediately he did not deserve it, and turned half away from him. Henry advanced submissively a step forwards, and Floretta receded another back; the one clasped his hands together in supplication, whilst the other, with her head bent down, kept plucking at the leaves of the hedge, and tearing off the buds. At last Floretta felt herself so much grieved by his boldness, that tears came into her eyes. Henry spoke to her, but she pretended not to hear him, amusing herself all the while with the leaves in her hand.

At last, perceiving that all his efforts were in vain, Henry exclaimed, 'Well, beautiful Floretta, if the sight of me is so hateful to you—if you are so implacable, and cannot pardon a joke, I'll leave you, and never more return. Farewell! but do not send me away without giving me one consolation, which is, that you are not angry with me. Do but say those few words, 'I am not angry,' at the same time bending on his knee before her.

Floretta looked down smilingly through her tears on the beautiful youth, who with his clasped hands appeared to her by far too supplicating. She could not help laughing at his posture, when, taking both her hands full of leaves, she threw them over his head, so that he was completely covered, and then jumped exultingly away.

Henry hastened after her, and soon overtook her, when they both became merry again. 'Now, confess to me, young sir,' exclaimed Floretta, 'tis you that have been encroaching upon my father's office, by digging a new garden round the spring.' Henry confessed it readily. 'Whenever Floretta goes to the spring of La Garenne,' said he, 'she shall remember me, even against her will; there I will encircle her with the prettiest flowers I can either find or procure. Would that I could procure all the joys of heaven, even with them I would encircle her!'

'Very pretty, young sir,' answered Floretta; 'but father is not at all pleased at your disturbing his garden, and transplanting the flowers before their time, and letting them die. You don't even water them.'

'I had no watering-can.'

'That you might easily have found a few paces from hence, at the entrance of the grotto, if you had given yourself the trouble to look for it.'

With that they both flew to the place where the water-pot was standing, and began to water the flowers together, and deliberate how the circle Henry had been digging might be beautified.

In this manner the time soon flew away, and Floretta hastened back to her father's cottage.

The young prince now amused himself all day at working at his new garden plantation, in which he was assisted by old Lucas. Nor was Floretta absent, for she went up and down talking and giving her advice about the new plants. Even the queen honoured them sometimes with a visit, to see what her son was doing. As for the king of France, he had little taste for such matters, and the Duke of Guise still less.

Often in later days had Henry more splendid and more glorious amusements, but surely none so sweet as those which he passed in the simplicity and quiet of his gardener-life, rendered so charming by the magic of first love. He and Floretta looked each other with the unrestrained pleasure arising from innocence; they played together like children, and was as familiar as brother and sister. They enjoyed the present without concerning themselves about the future, and their innocent passion never dreamt of any bounds. Floretta never gave it a thought that she was loved by the son of a queen, regarding in Henry only the blooming and manly youth. It was the same with the young prince. In his grey jacket, and the same simple dress which the other country-people wore, there was nothing which called to mind his high descent, and made him anticipate his future destination.

He troubled himself little about the great, and the beauties of the court; by the side of his Floretta nothing appeared beautiful, and nothing great compared with his rapture in seeing her. Whilst at work, his eye always rested on her beautiful figure, by which, however, the work was often neglected, or turned out rather bad. But who could refrain from looking on the lovely girl? Every part of her body was a separate beauty; every movement, every turn, graceful; and every word that fell from her lips full of inexpressible power to him. There was one thing, however, they discovered, which pleased neither of them very much, and that was, that the days they passed together in the garden were much shorter than those out of the garden: to obviate this, they determined to encroach upon the night, although they knew they would not be able to do any thing at that time; they thought however, they might sit down and rest themselves, and in the mean time chatter and prattle comfortably together.

'I shall be here at the spring at nine this evening,' said Henry softly to Floretta, whilst kneeling by her side setting some flowers. 'Will you, Floretta?'

'My father goes to bed at that time,' answered she.

'Will you, Floretta?' he whispered again, looking at her beseechingly.

'Well, then, if it's a fine clear evening, I will,' added she, nodding assent with her little head.

At nine o'clock precisely, Henry was at the spring of La Garenne. The sky was overcast, and Floretta not there. 'If it's a fine clear evening,' she said.—Now she'll not come,' thought Henry to himself. On a sudden there was a rustling through the leaves, and Floretta stood before him with the bucket on her head. Henry filled the bucket with water, and carried it on his head, whilst Floretta walked by his side, leaning on his arm. At last they came to the cottage of old Lucas, who was already in bed. Henry gave the bucket to Floretta, who thanked him kindly for his trouble.

'Good night, sweet Floretta,' exclaimed Henry.—'Good night, dear Henry,' replied Floretta.

The evening at the spring never appeared to either of them to be very tedious. Whether fine or wet, they never failed to be there at the appointed hour.

In this manner they passed away together a month of a most lovely spring. Every evening the young prince carried the bucket of his mistress to the cottage.

Floretta's father never once perceived that his daughter always had such a desire to go for the water so late. The prudent Lagaucherie, however, at length discovered that his royal pupil absented himself from the palace regularly every evening as soon as it began to be dark, and that the crown of his cap was always wet on his return, whether it had been raining or not. For a long time he was totally unable to solve the enigma, and as the young prince never mentioned the circumstance, Lagaucherie abstained from asking him. His curiosity, however, at length became so excited, that he determined one evening to watch the young prince's movements. He followed him at a distance, so that he could not be perceived, and at last saw him stop at the spring of La Garenne, and a female figure standing by his side. Both all at once disappeared. A part of the enigma was now solved, but still the tutor could not divine how the young prince's cap became so wet. Having waited a considerable time, he stole nearer and nearer, until he heard them whispering to each other. At last he saw the young prince with a bucket of water on his head, and the female leaning on his arm, go in the direction of the gardener's cottage, and from thence return as fast as he could to the palace. At this the mentor shook his head suspiciously, and determined to impart in secrecy to the queen what he had seen. The prince's mother, on hearing it, was very much embarrassed at the circumstance, and was on the point of calling for young Henry, to lecture him on the subject.

'No, gracious madam,' exclaimed the prudent La-

gaucherie, 'passions are not to be subdued by lectures. Punishments and persecutions only tend to inflame them; by confining the stream, you only swell it the more. Temptations are to be overcome by separation from the enticing object, and passions subdued by withdrawing the nourishment that supports them, or by raising others more noble in opposition.'

Such were the sentiments of Lagaucherie. The queen entirely approving of his views, concerted with him the measures necessary to be taken.

The next morning the tutor entered the young prince's apartment, and began to remind him what the world expected from him; that he must now think of rendering himself fit hereafter to become a ruler; that when fighting, either with the crosses of fate, or with his own inclinations, or with enemies in the field, he must have only one device, the foundation of all glory, namely—to conquer or die!

After this introduction, Lagaucherie informed him, seemingly quite as a matter of course, that the queen, his mother, would repair in a few days with the whole of her court to the Castle of Pau, Henry's native place, where, after remaining for a short time, he would have to travel onwards to Bayonne, to be there present at the interview about to take place between the King of France and the Queen of Spain.

Henry heard what his preceptor had to say to him without uttering a word, but betrayed great uneasiness in his looks, which Lagaucherie perceived, although he pretended not to notice it. Then turning quite unconcernedly the conversation to other subjects, the preceptor diverted the prince's attention by relating to him all the news he had heard of late, and thereby scarcely allowing him to think of that which was uppermost in his mind, and such a source of uneasiness to him. The queen followed Lagaucherie's example, and talked a great deal about the splendid assembly there would be at Bayonne, about the festivals that would then take place, and the celebrated characters Henry would there see. What could the young prince reply; he could not think of remaining at Nerac alone? How could he say that the interview of Love at the spring of La Garenne was to him infinitely more welcome than the interview of royalty at Bayonne.

With the appearance of the evening star in the heavens, Henry stood by the spring of La Garenne, where he was soon accompanied by the light-hearted Floretta; but when he informed her of their approaching separation, she was almost ready to die with grief. Who could paint her despair—who describe the sufferings of Henry? Embracing each other closely, they wept complaining of their bitter fate, and at the same time trying to instil into each other that comfort, of which they both stood so much in need.

'So you are now going to desert me, Henry,' she exclaimed, sobbing; 'you will soon forget poor Floretta, and I shall be alone on the earth. Now that you are going, I shall have nothing in this world to look forward to but death!'

'But,' exclaimed Henry, 'I shall not leave thee for ever; I shall soon return, and to whom do I belong if not to thee? Am I not wholly and for ever thine? What should I ever retain in my memory were I to forget thee? Thou art the life of my sweetest recollections, and before I loose thee out of my memory I shall loose my very existence.'

'O Henry! you will return no more; and if you should, you will not know Floretta.'

'Alas, Floretta! thou art much happier than I am. Here the scene of our happiness, this garden and this spring, will remain open to thee. To-morrow, when I have lost thee, I shall be thrust out of paradise—a wanderer in another world; in a desert, solitary amongst thousands. For that reason will my heart yearn after thee the more. When far away, one single flower that had but blossomed at the foot of this foundation would transport me with raptures. When

I am hated or feared by those that surround me, thou wilt be loved, be idolized by others. Other men will see thee, and worship thee; and those, perhaps, thou wilt think more lovely than me!'

Thus they were conversing together for a long time. Tears, vows, and caresses—fresh doubts and fresh assurances succeeded, until the turret clock of the palace called the prince away, and reminded them both that the hour of parting was arrived.

Floretta then suddenly seized hold of Henry's hand, and pressing it to her bosom, exclaimed, 'Seest thou this spring of Garenne? There wilt thou ever find me, ever as to-day. And look, Henry; if thou art not ever the same, in like manner as this fountain pours forth its inexhaustible life, so shall I my inexhaustible love, until laid hold of by the hand of death. Henry, I can cease to live, but never, living, cease to love. Here thou wilt find me again, ever as to-day—over here.'

She disappeared, and the youthful prince staggered through the garden to the palace, sobbing bitterly.

The journey, however, which Henry undertook, by diverting his mind, soon enabled him to overcome his grief. The first fifteen months which he passed, after his departure from the spring of La Garenne, filled his mind with other thoughts. Amidst the tumults which were at that time distracting France, he began to display that activity and intrepidity of character in the field, by which he afterwards rose to such immortal fame. He was already the admiration of the brave; and the ladies at the court of Catherine de Medicis tried to console him, more than perhaps was necessary, for the loss of Floretta.

The glory and praises of her lover soon reached the ear of Floretta; he was no longer the young gardener that formerly took delight in setting flowers whilst kneeling by her side; but the warrior, ranging about through countries, searching after fresh laurels. It was not the Prince of Bearn she had ever loved, but the simple Henry; and now his dazzling transformation excited not so much her wonder as her sorrow. She had heard how the beauties at court tried to entangle him in their snares, and how he, prone to inconstancy, attached himself first to the one, and then to the other. He was the only man in the world on whom her affections had ever dwelt; and now, having lost all faith in him, she lost all faith in human nature. The grief she endured was soon the means of breaking her heart. What had now arrived, her reason had already, but in vain, foreseen.

In his travels, Henry at length visited Nerac once more. There seeing him one day promenading up and down the gardens and groves of La Garenne, in company with the beautiful Demoiselle d'Ayelle, she could not resist the strong desire that arose in her, to throw herself just in their way.

The sight of Floretta, who even now pale with grief, was still more beautiful in her sorrow than before in the brightness of her joy, suddenly aroused in the young prince all the dear recollections of his first love. He became distracted, and would have instantly run up and clasped her in his arms, had he not been prevented by the lady at his side, and the circumstance of a number of the courtiers also being in the garden, from yielding to his desires. The following morning, however, perceiving old Lucas busily employed in the garden, he stole to the cottage, where he found Floretta sitting alone. The sudden return of her father, however, prevented his having any conversation with her; he merely requested one hour's interview at the spring of La Garenne that evening, when she replied, without raising her head from her work, 'At eight o'clock thou wilt find me there!' He then hastened away from the cottage again, the same as in former days. His whole soul burnt for Floretta, and he could scarcely await the coming of the evening.

It was dark, and the clock had already struck the appointed hour. In order not to be met by any one,

he went through a back gate of the palace, along a by-way, which he still remembered, that led to the thicket. At last he came to the spring, but Floretta had not yet appeared. He waited a few minutes, his heart beating terribly all the while. On a sudden he was aroused by a rustling of the leaves, and already extended his arms to fly to meet her, and press her to his breast. To his grief, however, it was not Floretta, but merely the blowing of the wind. He walked up and down impatiently for a while, and at last perceived in the dark, not far from the spring, something white, as if a part of her dress. He went up to it, and found a sheet of paper, together with the arrow and the pierced rose. There was writing on the paper, but the darkness of the night prevented his being able to read it.

Terrified and agitated, he hastened to the palace, exclaiming, 'What! does she not come—does she send me back the arrow, because she has ceased to love me?'

He read the paper, on which were only these words: 'I promised thou wouldst find me this evening at the spring of La Garenne. Perhaps thou hast passed by without seeing me. Look better, and thou wilt surely find me. Thou hast ceased to love, when thou seest this I shall have ceased to live.'

Henry soon divined the meaning of these words. The palace resounded with his cry; the servants all hastened at the call of the young prince, and with lighted torches accompanied him to the spring of La Garenne.

But why prolong the sorrowful tale? The dead body of the innocent girl was found in the pond formed by the water of the spring, and afterwards consigned between two young trees to the earth.

The grief of the young Prince of Bearn was without bounds.—Henry IV. is to this day the idol of the French. He accomplished many great things—he fought, lost, and won; but never again did he win a heart so pure and so faithful as the heart of Floretta, the sorrowful recollection of whom he retained to the last.

Such was the first, and such the only love of Henry IV. of France. He never loved again. J.J.B.

THE GERMAN LANGUAGE.—It is in the latter part of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century, that we find the German language nearly degraded; in which state it lingered on till the middle of the last century, when it was roused from its torpor by Lessing, Klopstock, and others, who soon spread new life through the literary world of Germany; and at the close of the eighteenth century we find the language expanding in renovated strength and beauty. Native poets and philosopher's polished and enlarged it; many old genuine German words were restored, and new ones, which had neither gained nor deserved the right of denizenship, expelled for ever. The nation at large supported these exertions of their great men, and rewarded them with general applause and profound respect. The German language no longer appears in that motley garb which so ill became its grave majestic character; its wants are supplied from its own inexhaustible stores, which historical inquirers have laid open. The immeasurable empire of ideas and perceptions is equalled by the boundless treasures of the German language; and the native author, who seeks there, will have no need of borrowed expressions from any foreign language.

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